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M I N U T E S

OF THE

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

12 - 17 February 1989

Meeting held in

Geneva, Switzerland

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Geneva, Switzerland
12-17 February 1989

1. OPENING ACTIONS

A. Introduction and Worship

On Monday 13 February members of the Executive Committee attended morning worship at the Ecumenical Centre; the preacher was the Very Rev. Dr Lois M. Wilson. Thereafter, morning worship services were prepared by members of the WCC staff. Meditations were led by Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian, Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Mr Yorgo Lemopulo and Rev. Ofelia Ortega.

The whole day of Monday 13 February was devoted to a discussion on Vital and Coherent Theology. A summary of this debate, prepared by the Moderator, Dr Heinz Joachim Held, is appended to these Minutes.

B. Opening session on Tuesday 14 February

The meeting convened at 9.05 hrs on Tuesday 14 February at the Centre Paroissial de la Jonction. The General Secretary expressed thanks to the pastor, Rev. Claire Chimelli, for the warm hospitality extended to the Committee. Mme Chimelli welcomed members of the Committee and staff present and made reference to the living ecumenism being experienced in the area due to the proximity of the Roman Catholic and Reformed parishes.

C. Roll call

The General Secretary called the roll of those attending and presented apologies from Dame Nita Barrow, Bishop Dr Johannes Hempel, His Beatitude Ignatios IV, Most Rev. W.P. Khotso Makhulu, Mr Bena Silu, and Rev. Dr J. Oscar McCloud. The General Secretary welcomed Mr John Briggs to his first meeting as a member of the Executive Committee.

Dr Love asked that a letter of good wishes be sent on behalf of the Executive Committee to Mr Ninan Koshy, CCIA Director, who was shortly to undergo surgery.

D. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held in Loccum, FRG, 8-9 August 1988, having been previously circulated, were confirmed.

E. Adoption of agenda and timetable

The General Secretary presented a revised agenda and timetable, which were adopted.

2. PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MODERATOR

In the absence of the Moderator, Dr J. Oscar McCloud, the Preliminary Report on Finances was presented by Dr Lois Wilson:

It is still too early to have the final results of 1988. However, preliminary unaudited figures indicate that the Council as a whole will have drawn on its reserves for the second year in a row. A drop of approximately half a million Swiss francs in 1988 is to be expected, compared to 1.3 million in 1987. Nevertheless, the overall outcome of 1988 is better than anticipated, and many sub-units have maintained or increased their fund balances at year end.

The Finance Sub-committee would be reviewing the 1989 budget as requested by the Central Committee in August 1988. It would consider whether the 95% limit on spending levels could be waived in view of the more balanced income vs. expenditure situation.

The Sub-committee would also look at a preliminary budget for 1990 with a view to reaching the goal of globally balanced current income vs. current expenditure by 1991.

Special funding for the CWME World Conference in San Antonio and the JPIC World Convocation would be reported. While there do not appear to be major difficulties in reaching the target for CWME, funding of the JPIC World Convocation appears to be more problematic.

At present, many pledges have been received for the Seventh Assembly, but after three years of correspondence, more than 150 member churches have not responded at all, nor even acknowledged receipt of our requests. Further efforts will be needed in this area.

The Executive Committee would receive a more substantial report on all these issues in the Report of the Finance Sub-committee.

3. REPORTS BY UNIT STAFF MODERATORS ON ACTIVITIES SINCE AUGUST 1988

Unit I

Prof. Sabev referred to two consultations organised in the United States involving the Black Churches: one by Faith and Order on the study "Unity of the Church and Renewal of Human Community" in September, the second by Urban Rural Mission (URM) on "Witnessing through Community Organising Strategies" in December 1988.

He drew attention to three current major tasks: preparations for the World Mission Conference in San Antonio in May 1989; the work of Church and Society on preparing a paper on biotechnology at the request of Central Committee; and the Faith and Order Plenary Commission meeting to take place in August 1989, which is to receive a substantial report on the BEM reception process together with study papers on Confessing our Faith, and on the Unity of the Church and Renewal of Human Community.

Unit II

Ms Sovik highlighted some major events in the life of the Unit in recent months. A consultation on Namibia took place in Harare in January to look at the needs there in the period up to and after independence; special reference was made to the work of the 3R Committee (Repatriation, Resettlement, Rehabilitation) set up by the churches to assist returning refugees. She emphasised the importance of communication to help the world understand events taking place in Namibia, especially with regard to the need for reconciliation and nation-building.

Reference was made to the Eminent Church Persons' Group (ECPG) which had recently visited seven countries whose governments continue to support the South African government in economic terms (see separate report on page 12). Metropolitan Gregorios gave a full report on the visits in which he had taken part.

The Christian Medical Commission together with Church and Society and the Office of Education are collaborating on work in response to the AIDS crisis. CMC has recently come to the end of a ten-year study on Health, Healing and Wholeness which would be shared with the Central Committee in July 1989.

Unit III

Ms Oduyoye referred to the enlarged meeting of the Unit Executive Group to take place in April in Finland. The emphasis would be on renewal and spirituality, and the hope is to gain some clarity on the needs up to and beyond the Seventh Assembly. A first attempt would also be made to discuss the issue of theological language in view of the central concern for participation and inclusiveness.

A meeting is planned for October to consider how to promote some of the aims of the Ecumenical Decade - Churches in Solidarity with Women in the churches and related movements, in an attempt to move towards commitment for joint action.

Unit III continues to search for ways of being an instrument of the ecumenical movement, and to this end to increase collaboration between the sub-units wherever possible. Discussions are taking place to promote closer links between PTE and Bossey in the fields of theological education and leadership training. Renewal and Congregational Life is involved in a study on the role of the pastor in the light of current challenges, and reports the completion of the new Ecumenical Prayer Cycle. The sub-unit on Women in Church and Society is trying to ensure that the voices of Orthodox women are heard more widely and with greater understanding, while the Youth Office is continuing its efforts to form a global network and to ensure a youth presence at meetings. Education and Women both have extensive JPIC involvement.

4. PROGRESS REPORT ON JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

The General Secretary urged that preparations for the JPIC World Convocation be seen as the first priority task in the coming months. He referred to a number of related events planned in the

different regions, including Europe (CEC European Assembly in May in Basel), Asia and Latin America. Ways must be found to stimulate covenanting, bringing people together in the kind of solidarity that is so much needed in the world.

Dr Bührig drew attention to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church had so far only agreed to collaborate in the preparations for the World Convocation and their participation was not assured. They were however fully involved in the European assembly through the Conference of European Bishops who are cooperating closely with the Conference of European Churches.

Ms Kaddu urged that care be taken to ensure that documents for sharing with the churches be clear and concise, bearing in mind the need for translation into local languages.

According to the timetable presently envisaged, the Preparatory Group for the Convocation would meet in April; the first draft of the preparatory document would be sent to member churches for comment by August, and a small group would work on the responses to prepare a draft document for the Convocation itself. Reception by the churches would follow after the Convocation. Some thought is being given to the possibility of having a liturgical event at the Assembly centred on commitment to the JPIC process and its results. (see also Report of the Finance Sub-committee, p.24).

5. ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONSHIPS

Dr Nababan raised a question about relationships with the Roman Catholic Church. He said that although in Jakarta the churches have good relationships with the Roman Catholic bishops, there is a problem in rural areas. He asked whether there was any agreement between Geneva and Rome about such cooperation.

The General Secretary said that if such a question were raised officially with the WCC, then the WCC can raise it officially with Rome.

Other members of the Executive Committee mentioned the problem of proselytism by Roman Catholics, particularly in Orthodox areas. Prof. Sabev said this was a matter of continuing concern and would be referred to in the Sixth Report of the Joint Working Group.

With regard to the major discussion scheduled to take place at the next meeting of Central Committee on the subject of WCC/RCC relations, the Executive Committee agreed, on the recommendation of the Programme Sub-committee, to postpone this until March 1990. (see report on Central Committee 1989, p.14).

6. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary made reference to the request by the Executive Committee in Loccum in August 1988 that he should seek advice from representatives of WCC member churches in South Africa with regard to PCR grants to liberation movements. It is clear that grants from the Special Fund must be made on the basis of the

specific projects for which funds are requested, and that it is not for the World Council to make a judgement on the comparative significance of the bodies which apply for grants. Metropolitan Gregorios had also had opportunity to discuss this question in the context of his meetings with the Eminent Church Persons' Group.

The General Secretary mentioned several matters for information:

- Due to changes in resettlement policies in relation to refugees, in particular on the part of the US government, CICARWS would be closing down its offices in Vienna, Athens and Rome. This was seen as an important change for the WCC, as these offices had provided an important service for refugees from many different areas for a period of more than 40 years.

- At the end of February there would be a meeting with General Secretaries of the Regional Ecumenical Organisations (REOs) in an attempt to produce an agreement for a modus operandi between the WCC and the REOs.

- The Assembly Planning Committee (APC) would meet in April and a full report would be presented to the Central Committee in Moscow. Bible study materials in English would appear shortly; a staff task force is doing some preliminary work on the theme and sub-themes and other groups are working on details related to programme, preparations, worship and communication.

- The Assembly Worship Committee held its first meeting in January and produced some initial ideas; they are to hold a workshop in Canberra in November and will report to Central Committee in March 1990.

The main thrust of the General Secretary's report was The Future of the WCC, as outlined in a document prepared by staff on the basis of extended discussions and shared with members of the Executive Committee. He urged members to respond to the challenges raised and asked for support in transmitting to the Central Committee the need for certain changes in the working structures. He felt that the opportunity to take a serious look at the modus operandi of the Council was responding to a concern felt by many.

He drew attention to several questions that were frequently raised such as: Where are we now in the WCC? What is the main vocation of the Council? What are the challenges for the future? The search for visible unity and eucharistic fellowship involves different levels of church life - it is not only a question of doctrinal agreement but also of spirituality, communion, solidarity, common witness, and so on.

He highlighted the following points:

a. the need to keep our identity as a council of churches: to bring new churches into the fellowship, to enable dialogue with churches which have so far declined participation in WCC, to be in relation with smaller churches;

b. the need for clarity about our vocation: the WCC is at the service of the member churches as an enabler, but it has also a

prophetic role - to challenge the churches to greater expressions of unity;

c. the need to clarify the relationship between action groups/ movements and the churches: the WCC is accountable to the churches but the people of God have adopted a rich variety of forms; how can we achieve the broadest possible participation and representation? The challenges must be kept before the churches, but we need to recognise that the churches have their own authorities through which they have to work.

The General Secretary then made reference to a number of problems inherent in the present structure, and the question of staff balances. He asked the Executive Committee to appoint an Ad hoc Group to work further on some of the proposals offered, bearing in mind the comments made by the Executive Committee. A report would then be shared with Central Committee in Moscow.

7. THE FUTURE OF THE WCC - DISCUSSION OF GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Members of the Executive Committee expressed appreciation for the General Secretary's analysis of the present situation of the WCC and the challenges that need to be faced. A number of points were raised that should be taken into account as discussions proceed.

Several members asked about the place of Christian World Communions (CWCs) in the ecumenical context and how the World Council can relate to them in a mutually helpful way; how can overlapping be avoided when both bodies are involved in work on similar concerns? There is an increasing problem for churches which are related to three bodies - to a regional ecumenical organisation (REO), a confessional body, and the WCC - and which are thus faced with finding three financial contributions. Is there any way of establishing a combined approach to the ecumenical challenge?

On the other hand, it was noted that there are some churches, notably united churches, which do not relate to a CWC at all.

Dr Held asked what could be done to relate to churches remaining outside the Council, especially those which are not in favour of conciliar expressions of church life. What is the self-understanding of the WCC as a council of churches, and how can its relationship to member churches, as well as to action groups and movements, be structured in a clear way?

Metropolitan Chrysostomos stressed that membership of numerous small Protestant churches in the Council remains difficult for the Orthodox and asked that this be kept in mind when seeking ways to relate to non-member churches. Metropolitan Gregorios noted that a high percentage of the work of WCC staff involves service to non-Orthodox churches, and this does not facilitate the work of Orthodox staff members.

Dr Tolen felt that it should be possible to make certain internal changes related to programmes and to streamline staff work where necessary without undertaking a full re-structuring process.

Archbishop Kirill considered it a mistake to think that structural changes would solve all the Council's problems; we would simply be repeating a similar exercise to the one carried out by the earlier Structure Committee of 1971 and still be unable to produce any really effective results.

Ms Skuse felt that we had reached a point where relationships with member churches were becoming fragmented because the Council is demanding too much of them: it is difficult for them to absorb all the material related to the numerous world consultations organised since Vancouver, and impossible for many of them to respond to all the financial demands they are presented with. She asked whether the governing bodies were perhaps putting too much pressure on staff who feel they have no worthwhile programme unless they have a world meeting to organize.

Mr Voksoe agreed that there is a doubling of efforts within the ecumenical movement and urged that we take a serious look at whether all our current programmes are necessary for the future, and that we have the courage to terminate those which have served their purpose.

On the question of the role of commissions and working groups, it was noted that it is difficult to confine them simply to an advisory function with no decision-making possibilities. It had been thought that Unit Committees would play the role that commissions now play, but this had not worked out in practice.

Dr Love said that tensions can be positive, and a certain creative tension between the expertise of commission members should be maintained to keep the balance over against bureaucracy. Unity versus diversity, the pastoral versus the prophetic role - these give life and vitality to the ecumenical movement.

Varying views were expressed on the question of the leadership role of women in the churches. Ms Skuse and Ms Abayasekera stressed the essential nature of women as leaders in the church, while Metropolitan Antonie and Metropolitan Gregorios spoke of the importance of keeping the chosen leaders of the churches within the World Council and feared the growing tendency to lose their support and interest.

Dr Love suggested that instead of referring to a reduction of programmes we should speak about 'concentration and focus', and think in a positive way aiming to promote the central task and mission of the Council. She proposed that consideration be given to forming a 'planning unit' within the staff, not related to any programme but with a mandate to watch and plan for the future. She felt this would help provide the flexibility required for adjusting to needs as they arise.

Arcbishop Kirill urged that more attention be given to communication with the churches, and to achieving a better balance between the role of staff and that of the representatives of the churches. How can the churches be more actively involved in creating WCC policy? And how can the everyday life of the churches be influenced by what is happening in the World Council? He did not think that restructuring would not bring us closer to the unity we seek.

The General Secretary thanked members for their contributions to the debate and responded to a number of the points raised. He saw the need for more interaction with the churches; to ensure that the World Council is more fully taken into the life of the churches while able to listen to what is going on in the churches themselves. There is a need to liberate human, intellectual and spiritual resources for this task - not by increasing the number of staff but by concentrating our work and creating more flexible structures. If the WCC is more visible to the churches it will be more real in a spiritual sense; we are urged to respond more intelligently to the intention to promote the unity of the churches, and with the resources we have we believe it is possible to liberate those human forces necessary for this task.

The General Secretary asked the Executive Committee to affirm that the time is ripe for attempting to look at the modus operandi of the Council and to provide ways for the Central Committee to look at some clear options while keeping in mind the limitations.

The General Secretary's report was referred to the Programme Sub-committee for discussion and recommendation.

At a later session, Metropolitan Chrysostomos presented the report of the Programme Sub-committee:

Taking into consideration the discussion of the report on the Future of the WCC in the plenary and in the Programme Sub-Committee, the following recommendations were made:

1. that the title "The Future of the WCC" be changed to a more precise designation of the focus of the report;

2. that the staff should re-draft the report in light of the discussions during this Executive Committee meeting;

3. that the Executive Committee appoint a small group which includes the Unit Moderators, Executive and Central Committee members, staff and other persons useful to the process; (see report of Nominations Sub-committee, p. 21)

4. that this group consider within its working mandate:

   a) an evaluation and assessment of present structures and programmes,
   b) concrete proposals about programme structure (organization), and
   c) a comprehensive vision of the World Council;

5. that this group prepare a report to the Central Committee in Moscow, July 1989, enabling it to recognize the urgency of the process, to approve guiding principles and to develop specific proposals for action in March 1990, taking into account juridical, financial and human implications.

The Executive Committee agreed to these recommendations.

8. PUBLIC ISSUES

A. Procedures for Public Issues at meetings of Central Committee

Ms Berry introduced a paper outlining procedures for public issues at Central Committee meetings, aiming at more transparency and clarity. This was passed to the Programme Sub-committee for study and recommendation.

At a later session, Metropolitan Chrysostomos presented the report of the Programme Sub-committee on this matter. The Sub-committee recommended the suggested additional procedures proposed with an additional paragraph in point 5 (incorporated below):

Suggested Additional Procedures for dealing with Public Issues

1. Every effort should be made to reduce the number of public issues on which statements are made by the Central Committee.

2. The Central Committee should be informed in advance of the procedures. It should be emphasised that a public statement by the Central Committee is only one among several ways of dealing with such matters.

3. In presenting the public issues for action, the General Secretary may indicate ongoing actions especially in international affairs. Written information may be provided on actions relating to major issues in the period between Central Committee meetings.

4. It should be made clear that resolutions related to programmes should be brought through Unit Committees.

5. Proposals from members of the Central Committee (after the General Secretary has presented the proposals from the Executive Committee) may be considered by the Public Issues Committee, and on its recommendation the Officers may take the decision as to which among the proposals should be taken up under public issues, which be referred to one of the Programme Units, and which should be acted upon by the Officers or General Secretary.

(additional paragraph agreed by Executive Committee):

Proposals may be received orally during the plenary session in which the public issues are announced, or in writing to the moderator of the Public Issues Committee within 24 hours of the announcement. The Officers will inform the Central Committee of their decision about how to process these proposals as early as possible in the meeting.

6. In considering proposals for public issues and for any amendments, the following procedure should apply: if in the opinion of the Officers they deserve further study or consultation or are considered to be at variance with the policies and procedures of the WCC, the Moderator may rule that action on them be postponed to another meeting or that another course of action be followed.

7. The first draft of each statement should be brought to the plenary at an early session for a full first reading, and opportunity provided for comments. Amendments and suggestions should subsequently be given in writing to the Public Issues Committee within a stipulated time.

8. At a later session the Public Issues Committee should bring the revised drafts to the plenary, explaining any changes made, and giving reasons why any proposals for change have not been found acceptable. Each statement should then be presented to the Central Committee for adoption.

The Executive Committee agreed. In addition, the Committee noted that the Central Committee should receive early notice of the procedures, with special emphasis on the additional procedures (in a simpler, summarized form), by mail, and should be asked to adopt them during the opening ceremonies when the public issues are announced. The timetable for receiving proposals on additional concerns raised by members of Central Committee and amendments to draft public issue statements should be published in the information booklet for Central Committee.

B. The Vienna Accords

It was proposed that there be a brief interim statement welcoming the recent Vienna Accords; Dr Wilson and Archbishop Kirill were asked to prepare a draft.

At a later session Dr Wilson presented the proposed statement. Bishop Toth asked that reference be made to the fact that religious freedom is being recognized as an integral part of Human Rights. With this change, the Executive Committee agreed to the following text:

> The Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, 12-18 February 1989, welcomes with joy and hope the signing of the Vienna Accords in January 1989. These agreements are a concrete expression of the increasing openness on the part of the states of both East and West Europe to establish workable mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes. In addition, the agreement contains a series of steps designed to begin to put into practice the linkage between human rights and peace and security. This linkage, first appearing in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and long supported by the World Council of Churches, is crucial to the progress of international development and reconciliation. The Executive Committee hopes that states party to the Vienna Accords will proceed without delay or reservation to implement the agreement; that states will use the Accords as an example and inspiration to their own work on peace, development and human rights, including religious freedom.
>
> The Executive Committee asks the CCIA to share with member churches information and analysis on the Vienna Accords, specially pointing out the new opportunities they provide for the life and witness of the churches.

C. Romania

In accordance with the request of the Central Committee at its meeting in Hanover in August 1988 for a report on action taken by the WCC in cooperation with CEC with regard to Romania, a report on the present situation was shared with the Executive Committee.

Bishop Toth expressed grave concern about the position of the Hungarian ethnic minority in Romania and urged that a frank discussion take place in order to prepare the kind of report requested by Central Committee. He felt that the churches in Hungary had not been adequately consulted.

Metropolitan Antonie explained that Romania's problems are political and the churches do not feel competent to be involved in such issues. He pointed out that at Hanover the General Secretary had asked for responses from the churches in Romania and these had now been received; it was clear that the churches do not wish for interference from outside the country, and Metr. Antonie urged that the WCC continue its policy of listening to the churches in the area of concern and refraining from any action which might place those churches in a difficult position. He pleaded for calm and said that time was needed to search for a solution.

The matter was referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

At a later session, Metropolitan Chrysostomos presented the report of the Programme Sub-committee which proposed the following recommendation:

> The Executive Committee has received information from the staff and its own members as well as from member churches in the area about the situation in Romania. In the discussion, differing views were expressed: some said there were problems, the Romanian member churches reported that they had no problems. In light of the information received, the Executive Committee requests the General Secretary:
>
> 1. to keep in touch with developments and to reaffirm the prayerful fraternal relationship of the WCC member churches with the churches in Romania;
>
> 2. to promote and facilitate exchange of visits between member churches of the WCC and CEC and the churches in Romania;
>
> 3. to arrange a meeting of representatives of churches in the area with a view to strengthening ecumenical fellowship in the present context;
>
> 4. to prepare a report for the Central Committee in Moscow.

The Executive Committee agreed to this recommendation.

D. Sri Lanka

Ms Abayasekera asked that the situation in Sri Lanka be monitored by the WCC especially during the period leading up to the elections. She urged that attention be given to the situation by the Central Committee in Moscow.

E. Afghanistan

Archbishop Kirill expressed deep concern about the state of affairs in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of Soviet troops. He referred to the resolution by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Liebfrauenberg (France) in February 1980 under the heading "Threats to Peace" (see minutes p.17 ff), which expressed the hope for a peaceful solution in Afghanistan without external interference. He urged that serious attention be given by the CCIA to the development of events there in the coming months.

9. EMINENT CHURCH PERSONS' GROUP (ECPG)

The General Secretary spoke about the recent visits made by the Eminent Church Persons' Group appointed by decision of the Executive Committee at its meeting in Atlanta GA, USA in September 1987. The ECPG had visited governments, churches and church-related groups in the following countries: Switzerland, France, Belgium, United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, and the USA. They had also been received by the UN Secretary General, Mr Perez de Cuellar, the UN Special Committee on Apartheid, and the European Community in Brussels.

Metropolitan Gregorios had been a member of the Group for the visits to London, Bonn, Washington D.C. and New York. Their mandate was to ask for comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. They were received at high governmental level, and found particular interest in their mission in the FRG and the USA. At all meetings they had also referred to the situation in Namibia. Dr Held referred to a joint approach to banks by the churches in the UK, France, Switzerland, the USA and the Federal Republic of Germany regarding government negotiations about the rescheduling of loans to South Africa.

The Group's interim report and recommendations prepared by the Programme to Combat Racism were shared with the Programme Sub-committee.

At a later session the report of the Programme Sub-committee was presented as follows:

The Programme Sub-committee had agreed to receive an additional agenda item related to the Eminent Church Persons' interim report. The Sub-committee recommended:

a. that the interim report and recommendations of the Eminent Church Persons' Group (ECPG) be received by the Executive Committee, and that the General Secretary be asked to implement these wherever possible, in consultation with the churches in the countries concerned;

b. that the full report of the ECPG be put on the agenda of the Central Committee in Moscow for discussion and action;

c. that the General Secretary share the findings and recommendations of the ECPG with the member churches urging their immediate action;

d. that member churches be encouraged to coordinate their actions within and across countries with regard to (i) pressing for the adoption of comprehensive mandatory sanctions, and (ii) efforts to use the rescheduling of loans to South Africa to apply pressure to bring the minority government to the negotiating table with the genuine leaders of the people;

e. that WCC efforts to achieve sanctions and to use loan rescheduling as a means of pressure be coordinated with member churches in the countries involved;

f. that, in the light of recent major initiatives by the WCC and important developments in the region, a deliberative plenary during the Moscow Central Committee be devoted to a focus on Southern Africa.

In view of the fact that the Interim Report of the ECPG had only just been received by members of the Executive Committee, the General Secretary proposed that point a) above be deleted. This would not preclude action being taken on the other points in the period before Moscow.

The Executive Committee agreed to recommendations b) through e) above. With regard to point f), it was understood that the Officers would make the final decision on plenary topics in light of the whole Central Committee programme.

10. VITAL AND COHERENT THEOLOGY

Following the full-day discussion on this subject on 13 February, the matter was referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

At a later session, Metropolitan Chrysostomos presented the Sub-committee's comments as follows:

> The Executive Committee engaged in an all-day discussion of the concerns for a vital and coherent theology. The search for a vital and coherent theology must undergird the work of the WCC in the period leading up to the Seventh Assembly. The call to grow into a fully committed fellowship in confessing the apostolic faith, in proclaiming the Gospel to all creation, in struggling for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, and in developing genuine ways of sharing and caring, provides guidelines for the work of the WCC and criteria and goals for vital and coherent theology in the WCC. Particular attention should be given to the question of how the different contextual theological approaches in the world-wide fellowship of the churches are held accountable to each other and how they are related to the tradition of the apostolic faith.

The Executive Committee took note of these comments, and thanked the moderator, Dr Held, for his offer to prepare a summary of the day's discussions; this is included with these minutes as Appendix IV A. (An overview of the work done on this subject in the post-Vancouver period is also attached for reference as Appendix IV B).

11. CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING 1989

A proposed draft programme for the Central Committee in Moscow in July 1989 was referred to the Programme Sub-committee. Metropolitan Chrysostomos reported on behalf of the Sub-committee as follows:

> The Programme Sub-committee discussed the proposed Central Committee programme for Moscow, and certain changes were made. Two additional plenary topics were suggested - on World Poverty/ Hunger, and on Southern Africa - with the understanding that the Officers will make the final decision on plenary topics in light of the whole Central Committee programme.
>
> The Sub-committee recommended that the discussion requested by the Hanover Central Committee on WCC/RCC relationships be taken up only in connection with the Sixth Report of the Joint Working Group in 1990. It was further suggested that the request of the Hanover Central Committee to have a plenary on issues related to dialogue and mission could be accommodated in the plenary on the San Antonio World Mission Conference.
>
> The Sub-committee took note of the proposed Forum on Perestroika and strongly urged that a range of perspectives and experiences of perestroika be included.
>
> The Sub-committee recommended the adoption of the revised programme.

Archbishop Kirill spoke eloquently about the significance of the Central Committee meeting in Moscow, not only for the life of Christians in the Soviet Union but for the whole process of perestroika. He considered that the changes in Soviet society in the year since the Millennium celebrations were such that there would be even greater opportunity for those coming to Moscow to encounter the new things happening within Soviet society.

The Archbishop pointed out that for many years the Soviet Union has been a closed society, so the average Soviet citizen has very little knowledge of Christianity and even less about the ecumenical movement. The WCC therefore has a unique opportunity to communicate through the mass media and to inform Soviet society about the fellowship of Christian churches today, and of their wide ranging tasks and resources.

Secondly, Archbishop Kirill referred to a certain crisis of confidence on the part of the people in their government leaders because they have been let down in the past by those who alleged that they knew what had to be done for the needs of society. This has led people to a point where they are now listening carefully

to the voice of the Church, and are raising questions about it with those working in the service of the church; the voice of the WCC can thus become a source of hope to many. He therefore urged that Central Committee make every effort to use language which is biblical and understandable for the people, and to speak about problems that concern them. He referred to two matters which are of increasing interest in current public opinion:

- a broad dimension of the integrity of creation, not merely the protection of the environment; people are concerned with the inter-relatedness of civilisation and want to know what problems we all have to face and how we can work together to solve them.

- the question of dialogue between cultures: the WCC experience could be helpful in developing dialogue in the Soviet Union on the local level.

The Archbishop asked that if the issue of Poverty and Hunger were agreed on as a subject for a plenary presentation, it should be presented in a such a way as to help Soviet society to see the real issue in a global dimension, and not only as a Third World issue. It is time for the people to hear about the realities of the world to replace the image conveyed by the media in the past.

Archbishop Kirill concluded by saying that the Central Committee meeting in Moscow should be seen as a historic opportunity both for Soviet society and for the ecumenical movement.

The Moderator expressed thanks to the Archbishop for these considerations which would be very helpful as preparations for the meeting continue.

Dr Wilson urged that the stewards be introduced at an early session of Central Committee, for example, following the Rollcall. This might help them to feel more a part of the community of the World Council, which has apparently not been the case in recent meetings.

Reference was made to the positive experience in Hanover when the Finance Committee of Central Committee met together with the Finance Sub-committee of the Executive Committee and Dr Wilson expressed her hope that it would be repeated. Mr Coïdan said consideration was being given to this possibility.

Dr Love urged that, whatever changes might be made in the draft programme for Central Committee, seven sessions be maintained for the Unit Committees as this is the minimum required by Unit II to complete its heavy agenda.

Having noted these points, the Executive Committee accepted the two recommendations above.

12. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

A document on Responsibilities of Membership was submitted to the Programme Sub-committee for discussion and recommendation. The Sub-committee reported as follows:

The Programme Sub-committee received a proposal for a new Rule II to be included in the Rules of the World Council of Churches. It was noted that, following the adoption of such a text, the Central Committee should "identify specific guidelines by which the principle could be made workable, and such guidelines should be communicated to the member churches" as requested by the Sixth Assembly. In recommending the text below to the Executive Committee for presentation to the next meeting of the Central Committee for eventual inclusion in the Rules of the WCC, the Sub-committee also recommended that future consideration of guidelines pertaining to the implementation of the Rules include:

a. the elements appearing (in section B) in the text below;

b. ways to encourage and acknowledge the sharing of other contributions from the churches (i.e. hospitality, travel, personnel, information, translations and others) in addition to finance;

c. reference to the two-way process of sharing, the opportunities as well as responsibilities for mutuality in the Council and its membership.

In this light, the Sub-committee recommended the proposal below to be brought to the next meeting of the Central Committee:

Proposal for a new Rule II to be included in the Rules of the World Council of Churches.
(Should this new Rule be adopted, the present Rules II and following will be renumbered from III and following)

Rule II: Responsibilities of Membership

A. Membership in the World Council of Churches signifies faithfulness to the Basis of the Council and expresses fellowship in the Council and commitment to the ecumenical movement as central to the mission of the church. Churches which are members of the World Council of Churches are expected to:

1) appoint delegates to the WCC Assembly, the major policy-making body of the Council, and participate in council with other member churches in shaping the ecumenical vision and the ecumenical agenda and to assume responsibility for the costs of such representation;

2) inform the WCC of their primary concerns, priorities, activities and constructive criticisms as they may relate to WCC programmes as well as any matters which they feel need expression of ecumenical solidarity or which merit the attention of the WCC and/or churches around the world;

3) communicate the meaning of ecumenical commitment, to foster and encourage ecumenical relations and action at all levels of their church life and to pursue ecumenical fellowship locally, nationally, regionally and internationally;

4) interpret both the broader ecumenical movement and the WCC, its nature, purpose and programmes throughout their membership as a normal part of their own reporting to their constituency;

5) encourage participation in WCC programmes, activities and meetings;

6) respond to decisions of the Executive and Central Committee which call for study, action or other follow up by the member churches as well as respond to requests on matters referred by the Central or Executive Committee or the General Secretary for prayer, advice, information or opinion;

7) make an annual contribution to the general budget and programmes of the WCC commensurate with their resources as part of regular and intentional negotiation with the Council as to responsibilities of membership.
(This point has already been adopted: see Minutes of Executive Committee, Loccum, FRG, August 1988, p.14-15; endorsed by Central Committee, August 1988, Minutes p.53-55).

B. Other recognised aspects of membership responsibility, elements of which may be incorporated into the above proposal:

1) propose persons who could make a particular contribution to and/or participate in the various committees of the WCC, meetings and consultations, WCC programmes, publications and staff, and to assume financial responsibility for the costs of their participation;

2) establish links between their own programme offices and the appropriate WCC programme offices and promote WCC communications resources: books, periodicals and other publications.

In response to a question from Mr Voksoe, Mr Coïdan explained that the text under section A was a more formalised version of the Expectations of WCC Membership agreed by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Loccum in August 1988 for inclusion in the Rules. The points under section B were an attempt to include the concept of two-way sharing. The Executive Committee was being asked to affirm that these points be incorporated into section A, so that the whole text could be presented to Central Committee in Moscow.

The Executive Committee agreed.

13. REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE

Metropolitan Chrysostomos presented the rest of the report of the Programme Sub-committee. He expressed regret at having been unable to act as moderator of the Sub-committee and expressed thanks to Metropolitan Gregorios for undertaking this task.

A. Ecumenical News Service (ENS)

The Programme Sub-committee received with interest the progress report on the proposed Ecumenical News Service.

After a lively discussion the Sub-committee suggested that the final proposal should clearly state the advantages and disadvantages from an institutional point of view of the realization of such a service.

Mr Voksoe noted the lack of indication about the possible consequences for the rest of the WCC's information service and commitment if such an independent news agency were established. He considered that the WCC has a direct responsibility to communicate information about its work and this task cannot be left to an outside body. He felt it would not be responsible to take any action on the establishment of an independent agency without at the same time being fully aware of what this would mean for the rest of the information/communication obligation of the WCC.

The Executive Committee received the report and noted the comments of the Sub-committee as well as Mr Voksoe's remarks.

B. Global Youth Gathering (GYG)

The Programme Sub-committee received the informative report on the Global Youth Gathering; they discussed it with interest and expressed their support.

The Executive Committee took note of this report.

14. STAFFING MATTERS

Dr Talbot presented the report of the Staffing Sub-committee.

I. STAFFING RECOMMENDATION

Unit III

Youth

In accordance with the decision of Central Committee in August 1988, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend the appointment by postal vote of the Central Committee of Mr Peter Brock (Australia, Anglican Church of Australia) as Director for four years from an agreed date.

II. STAFFING DECISIONS

The Executive Committee authorized the General Secretary to proceed with the following appointments and contract extensions, to be binding only as from the actual signing by both parties of the corresponding contracts:

A. Appointments

General Secretariat

Ecumenical Institute, Bossey

Fr. Francis Frost, (UK, seconded by the Roman Catholic Church) as Lecturer/Tutor for three years from an agreed date.

Personnel Office

Rev. Carlos Sintado (Argentina, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina), at present Secretary for Development Education, Unit III, as Director from an agreed date.

Unit I

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths

Mr Hans Ucko (Sweden, Lutheran) as Secretary for Inter-Faith Dialogue for four years from an agreed date.

Unit II

Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development

Dr Rebecca Larson (Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada) as Executive Secretary (Development, Training and Advisory Services) for four years from an agreed date.

B. Contract Extensions

General Secretariat

Ecumenical Institute, Bossey

Ms Roswitha Ginglas-Poulet (FRG, Roman Catholic) Interpreter (part-time) (non-programme), from 1 June 1990 (will complete 20.1 years' service)

Mr John McVie (UK, Church of Scotland) Accountant/ Administrator (non-programme), from 1 March 1990 (will complete 12 years' service)

Department of Communication

Mr Peter Williams (Denmark, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark) Photographic/audio-visual services Coordinator (non-programme), from 1 May 1990 (will complete 10 years' service)

Mr Thevaradyil Thomas (India, Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar) Publications Editor (non-programme), for one year beyond retirement from 1 July 1990 (will complete 9.9 years' service)

Ms Rosemarie Doench (FRG, EKiD (Lutheran)) Translator (non-programme), from 1 July 1990 (will complete 22 years' service)

Rev. James Greig (UK, Church of Scotland) Translator (non-programme), from 10 May 1990 until 29 February 1992 (retirement) (will complete 5 years 9 months' service)

Ms Cornelia Kerkhoff (FRG, Roman Catholic) Translator (non-progrmme), from 1 July 1990 (will complete 20 years' service)

Ms Maria Julia Pascual (Spain, Roman Catholic) Translator (non-programme), from 1 August 1990 (will complete 12 years' service)

Ms Joan Reilly (UK, Church of Scotland) Translator, (non-programme), from 1 April 1990 (will complete 21 years' service)

Unit I

Faith and Order

Rev. Dr Nicolas-Gennadios Limouris (Greece, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Eastern)) Executive Secretary, from 1 July 1990 (will complete 10 years' service)

Unit II

Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service

Mr Melaku Kifle (Ethiopia, Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Oriental)) Coordinator, Refugee Service, from 1 March 1990 (will complete 12 years' service)

Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development

Mr Robert van Drimmelen (Netherlands, Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) Executive Secretary (Socio-economic Programmes), from 1 February 1990 (will complete 10 years' service)

Christian Medical Commission

Dr David Hilton (USA, United Methodist Church), Associate Director, from 10 March 1990 (will complete 7 years' service)

III. APPOINTMENT BY THE OFFICERS

It was reported that the Officers at their meeting in December 1988 authorized the General Secretary to make the following appointment:

General Secretariat

Ecumenical Institute, Bossey

Rev. Dr K. M. George, (India, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (Oriental)) as Lecturer for four years from an agreed date.

IV. VACANCIES

On the recommendation of the Staffing Sub-committee, the Executive Committee agreed to give power to the Officers to fill urgent vacancies that must be filled prior to its next meeting.

15. REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITEEE

In a closed session, Dr Talbot presented the report of the Nominations Sub-committee:

A. Vacancies on Central Committee

The Nominations Sub-committee considered proposals for the replacement of three members of Central Committee who had resigned. In a closed session, Dr Talbot presented the names proposed for nomination to the Central Committee to fill these vacancies. The Executive Committee agreed to nominate the persons proposed.

B. Youth Advisers at Central Committee

The Executive Committee at its meeting in Istanbul in March 1988 authorized the Youth sub-unit to invite six Youth Advisers to the Central Committee in Hanover. This was seen as an interim measure and sub-units were meanwhile urged to increase the number of youth among their quota of Advisers normally invited to Central Committee meetings. Particular attention was given to the following categories which are under-represented among Central Committee youth members: women, Orthodox, Latin America, Middle East, Asia and Eastern Europe. On the same basis, the officers of the Youth Working Group decided to ask the Executive Committee to recommend that six persons be appointed as additional Youth Advisers for the Central Committee in Moscow.

The Nominations Sub-committee recommended that this proposal be accepted. With one change, the Executive Committee agreed to the list of names proposed.

C. World Conference on Mission and Evangelism

A list of proposed official delegates to the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism in San Antonio, Texas, USA, in May 1989 was considered by the Nominations Sub-committee. Subsequent to the action of the Central Committee in Hanover in August 1988, which authorized the Executive Committee to complete the list of official delegates to the World Conference, and following the proposal by the CWME Executive Committee, the Nominations Sub-committee recommended:

- that approval be given for the list of persons designated to be official delegates in the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism (others having been approved by Central Committee in Hanover), and

- that authorization be given to CWME to complete the full roster of 300 delegates by final action on the 30 nominations still in process of negotiation and to replace any who may be unable to participate.

The Executive Committee agreed.

D. Appointment of Ad hoc Group on the Future

In a closed session, Dr Talbot presented the proposed list of membership for the Ad Hoc Group on the Future as requested by the General Secretary in his report. The task of the Group would be to prepare a full report for the Central Committee in Moscow, emphasising the importance of the process and to elaborate on the principles discussed following the General Secretary's report. The Central Committee would then be asked to appoint a larger more representative group.

With one change, the Executive Committee agreed to the membership of the Group as follows:

Moderator:	Metropolitan Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios	
Secretary:	Ms Mercy Oduyoye	
Members:	Metropolitan Antonie	)
	Dr Janice Love	) Moderators of
	Dr Aaron Tolen	) Unit Committees
	Ms Jean Skuse	)
	Prof. Vitaly Borovoy	
	Ms Céline Hoiore	
	Rev. Bernard Thorogood	
	Mr Per Voksoe	(member of Finance Sub-committee)
Others:	Mr Gabriel Habib	
	Prof. José Miguez-Bonino	
Ex officio	General Secretary + Deputy General Secretaries	
Alternates:	Ms Rose Jarjour	
	Rev. Margot Kaessmann	
	Mr Fructuoso Sabug, Jr.	
	Rev. Prof. Josef Smolik	

16. REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Lois Wilson presented the report in the absence of the Moderator, Dr McCloud.

1. 1988 Outcome

The main results of the 1988 fiscal year are preliminary and unaudited, and were therefore given to the Sub-committee for information only.

The total actual expenses are lower than the approved estimated expenditure by some Sfr 1,111,000. Noting that closing operating balances have globally increased by approximately Sfr 228,000, actual total income received was Sfr 37,477,225. This is less than the actual expenditure of the year, but only by Sfr 540,919. The outcome for the year is therefore much better than had been anticipated at the time of budget approval.

The Sub-committee expressed satisfaction that the 1987 overruns in Faith & Order, and Church and Society have been compensated for in 1988.

Exact figures on 1988 will be presented to the Committee in July.

The Executive Committee noted this for information.

2. 1989 and 1990 Income Projections

Undesignated Income: 1988 undesignated income (Sfr 5.9 million) was higher than projected due to the strengthening of the US dollar during the year. However, actual giving rates remained at or below Swiss inflation. For planning purposes, UDI projections for 1989 are at about Sfr 6 million (an increase of 1.6% over 1988); for 1990 6.2 million.

Programme Income: Based on 1988 actual figures and revised income projections for the current year, 1989 programme income is expected to be up 1.9% over 1988, less than Swiss inflation. For planning purposes, 1990 income is projected at 1989 levels except where pledges are known. Given the slightly weaker US Dollar projected for 1989 (-6.5%), this results in marginally lower income for 1990. With anticipated increases in giving, and foward sales where possible, actual Swiss franc income should remain stable over the two years at the 1988 level.

The Sub-committee reviewed the list of donors which provide nearly 85% of both budget-linked and project funds and noted that many have indicated that their own financial situations are not keeping pace with inflation. In some cases, funds for 1989 have been reduced over 1988 due to the internal situation of the donor. Despite higher per capita giving, reduced membership figures and the retaining of funds at lower judicatory levels suggest that this trend will continue.

The WCC has been able to maintain a stable level of income despite sizeable exchange losses from mid-1985 to mid-1988 through increased giving, but rates of giving generally cannot increase at present as they have in former years. Under present circumstances, the Council cannot expect to increase its actual Swiss franc income in the coming period.

The Sub-committee noted that the maintenance of and reporting on existing giving levels take most of the available OICD staff resources in light of the donors' own changing situations and priorities. Staff was therefore encouraged to find ways to distribute reporting responsibilities so that income development can receive additional staff time given the limited resources available for financial development purposes.

The Sub-committee draws the attention of the Executive to the fact that the OICD staff needs additional personnel resources in order to develop new income. The Sub-committee is not bringing a specific recommendation to this effect at this time, but wishes the Executive Committee to understand that this critical need is becoming more urgent.

Dr Wilson stressed however that the present style of work of the WCC cannot be assumed to continue at the same level and should be scaled down following the Seventh Assembly.

The Executive Committee took note of these projections.

3. Special Funding

a. CWME: The Sub-committee reviewed the status of pledges and payments toward the CWME World Conference later this year. The present shortfall vs budget is Sfr 95,430. In light of pledges still awaited from three major donors, other small amounts which may still come, and the close management of conference expenses by CWME, it was considered that this gap would be closed adequately.

b. JPIC: Following review of the pledges to date and other potential funding still to be negotiated for the 1990 World Convocation, the Sub-committee noted that the maximum funding to be expected in support of this event is Sfr 1.3 million against the authorisation for Special Funding of Sfr 1.9 million.

At Hanover, the Central Committee asked that the "Convocation costs not exceed the amount of resources available". In view of this concern, the Sub committee requested that the situation be monitored and that a report be brought to the Central Committee for review in July 1989. The Sub-committee discussed the possibility of using WCC reserve funds or distributing the convocation costs to the Sub-units (other than staff travel). Neither of these two funding mechanisms was found to be sound either in light of the overall financial situation of the Council or in relation to the double funding perspective of donors.

The Sub-committee thus recommended to the Executive Committee that staff and the JPIC Preparatory Committee prepare contingency plans for the Convocation consonant with the amount of special funding available, such plans to be presented to the Moscow meeting of the Executive and Central Committees.

Dr Love expressed concern at the prospect of the revised budget totalling only 68% of the original agreed amount, and noted that this would mean reducing the number of delegates to the World Convocation to approximatly 376 instead of 550 envisaged. She asked that the Preparatory Group for the Convocation be asked to give guidelines for reducing the number of participants should it be necessary for the Central Committee in July to agree to a lower budget total. Dr Bührig again pleaded for encouragement and support for the World Convocation; she regretted the seeming lack of enthusiasm which she had encountered among members of the Committee.

Dr Wilson emphasised the feeling of the Sub-committee that there be no question of trying to obtain additional funds by going to reserves or distributing costs to the sub-units, but rather to find a way of working within the limits imposed. Mr Voksoe said the Sub-committee did not wish to give an impression of a lack of enthusiasm and he reiterated the importance of seeing the Convocation as a stage on the way and not as the culmination of the JPIC process.

The Executive Committee accepted the recommendation.

c. Global Youth Gathering: Four of the six youth organisations have committed themselves to a process of coming together, including a Global Youth Gathering (GYG) in the second half of 1992. These are: WCC Youth, WSCF, World Alliance of YMCAs, World YWCA. The two Roman Catholic student organisations, IMCS and IYCS, will present this possibility to their world assemblies in 1990. A 1989 Ecumenical Youth Conference will formulate the theme and sub-themes of the Gathering. OICD has indicated to the Youth Subunit the need for a cooperative approach to funding among the involved organisations. No joint meeting has been held on this subject to date and no approach to donors has yet been made. The Sub-committee noted the timing difficulty of respecting the process in which the youth groups are engaged and the need for early discussion with the member churches and donor agencies so that they can plan support toward the Sfr 1,400,000 needed for this event.

4. Seventh Assembly Funding

The Sub-committee received a detailed report on the status of Seventh Assembly Funding which indicated that, at present, 114 pledges (or payments without pledge) have been received, totalling Sfr 4,963,439. Of the pledged amount, eight pledges greater than Sfr 100,000 account for 87%. The remaining pledges/ payments average Sfr 6,087 (106 donors, of which 64 from developing countries).

Six churches (total askings of Sfr 73,500) have responded with a firm no concerning Assembly contributions, although they will once again be encouraged to cover the costs of their delegates' participation.

Additional information was also provided as to the support being mobilised in Australia from church, agency and state sources. The Sub-committee noted that a careful review of specific costs (health insurance, transport, etc.) should be made as plans proceed, to be certain that responsibilities are clearly divided between the local Committee budget and the central budget for the Assembly.

Of most concern is the fact that over a three-year period of correspondence, there remain 154 churches (more than half) which have made no response whatsoever, not even acknowledging receipt of letters, 119 of which are in the so-called Second and Third Worlds. Unease was expressed as to what this might indicate in terms of the nature of their relationship to the Council. The askings related to these churches total Sfr 3,288,625. The remaining two dozen churches (askings of Sfr 1,344,547) have indicated either "maybe" or that their decision-making would take place at a later date.

As indicated in previous reports, both in response to the 1986 survey and subsequent correspondence, several churches have indicated difficulty in paying for their delegates' costs. Such responses will receive consideration in the eventual discussion of subsidies. However, the Sub-committee brings to the attention of the Executive Committee and the Assembly Planning Committee the need for early reflection on the criteria for travel and accommodation subsidies, particularly in light of the number of churches which have made no response to previous communications.

Questions were raised as to what kind of participation the WCC wants from its member churches at the Assembly and what are the financial terms of their participation. Suggestions were made as to how to encourage churches within a country to assist in subsidising the participation of churches with fewer financial resources. It was strongly re-emphasised, however, that transparency is needed in all bilateral support, and that the Council needs to be fully informed of such arrangements. The Sub-committee recommended that a list of churches which have not responded at all be provided to the next Executive Committee meeting with indication also given as to whether they are represented on the Central Committee.

In 1989, systematic correspondence will begin with church-related and other agencies to supplement the member church support, largely through grants in support of travel and accommodation subsidies. Assuming that present pledges listed are met in full and that over Sfr 1 million will still be pledged by the member churches, some Sfr 3 million remains to be assured through such efforts.

The Executive Committee agreed to the above recommendation.

5. 1989 Budget

The 1989 budget was approved by the Central Committee in August 1988 under the following conditions:

> "The staff is authorized to operate in 1989 on the basis of the appended budget, but all sub-unit and cost centers are only authorized to spend at the level of 95% of their budget."

The Executive Committee was requested to review this budget in February 1989, and especially the situations of CWME and JPIC, both of which were drawing on more than one third of fund balances available to them. In the case of JPIC, the Central Committee had agreed that the shortfall in JPIC income be carried by Unit II funds in 1989.

The staff have reviewed the budget and made the following modifications:

- The Investment Advisory Group indicated modified exchange rates to be expected in 1989. On the other hand, it has been possible to cover a rate of 1.55 Swiss franc to a US dollar through forward sales.

- On the basis of 1988 actuals and of pledges received, the income projections have been updated.

- The opening balances on 1 January 1989 are higher than anticipated in July last year.

- The house charges (overhead costs) have been reduced to take 1988 actuals into account.

- Staff vacancies have been costed and the corresponding staff salary lines of the budget reduced accordingly.

With these new elements, the 1989 estimated expense budget now appears as presented in Appendix III.

The following comments can be made:

a. CWME draws Sfr 400,211 from its fund balance or Sfr 85,127 more than the one third limit, in spite of its holding the position of Publications Secretary in abeyance during the whole year.

b. JPIC has a Sfr 260,894 shortfall in income. This can easily be covered by the funds available in Unit II. The drawdown on these funds would represent less than 20% of the balance available.

c. All other sub-units either increase their fund balances or need less than one third of their fund balance to guarantee a possible shortfall in income.

d. The undesignated funds required are slightly less than the corresponding income for the year.

Under the circumstances, except for CWME, the estimated expense budget is balanced according to the criteria set by the Executive Committee.

It is therefore recommended that the 95% limit on spending be waived, with the understanding that sub-units are not authorized to spend more than the estimated expenses budget presented in Appendix III.

The Executive Committee agreed to this recommendation.

So far as CWME is concerned, the Sub-committee held extensive discussions with the CWME Director and, after recognising that part of the sub unit's shortfall was related to decisions on redistributed costs made by the Central Committee in Hanover, recommended that the Director enter into discussions with URM and its donors to explore increased support of the administrative costs of URM and bring proposals to the Central Committee in Moscow.

The Sub-committee recommended that CWME be authorized to draw not more than one third of its operating fund balances to cover its 1989 shortfall, and that the CWME Director and the Finance staff report to the Finance Committee in Moscow on the steps taken to meet this objective.

The Executive Committee agreed to these recommendations.

6. 1990 Preliminary Budget

The 1990 preliminary budget presented to the Committee at this time is geared at defining the general assumptions that the staff should work with when building up the budget that will need to be approved by the Central Committee in July.

The assumptions on which the preliminary budget has been established is the 1989 budget as modified by the following factors:

Income

- The Investment Advisory Group, in its meeting of 31 January 1989, agreed that the exchange rates to be used in 1990 should be those used in 1989, except for the US dollar, the rate of which is forecast at an average 1.45 Sfr to a dollar during 1990, and a corresponding drop of the Canadian dollar.

- In accordance with the practice adopted since 1985, the sub-units will not consider their fund balances to be available as a guarantee against a possible shortfall in income beyond one third of their amount as on 1 January 1990.

Expenses

- The amount calculated for staff salaries is based on the 1989 revised budget, increased by 3% to take into account the average value of step increases over the period.

- The overhead charges have already been decided by the House Committee and have been introduced in the budget.

- The cost of meetings, consultations, travel and hospitality has been reduced to take the proximity of the Seventh Assembly into account, i.e. several sub-units will hold a meeting of their officers, but not a meeting of their full commission or working group.

- Other expenses are based on 1989 revised budget levels, increased by 2.5% to take inflation into account.

- The impact of closing the CICARWS Refugee Offices has been accounted for, as well as the reduced level of JPIC after the Convocation.

On the basis of the above assumptions, the total expenditure level of the preliminary 1990 budget is lower than that of the 1989 budget by over 1.1 million Swiss francs.

On the income side, Sfr 28,260,000 can be expected, unless the currency situation changes drastically in 1990. This is more than the expected expenses as forecast in the preliminary budget.

Except for internal imbalances, the 1990 preliminary budget is therefore globally balanced and fund balances should not be needed to cover current expenditures of that year.

On the basis of the preliminary budget presented, the goal of balancing current expenditure and current income set for 1991 would appear to be attainable the year before the Assembly.

The Sub-committee recommended that the 1990 budget be prepared for the Central Committee on the basis of the above assumptions.

The Executive Committee agreed.

7. WCC General Endowment Fund

At its meeting in Reykjavik in September 1986 the Executive Committee agreed to establish a WCC General Endowment Fund. The rules of this Fund indicate that:

it "will receive unearmarked unrestricted monies given to the WCC as a whole through will, bequest or legacy."
"The actual crediting of such amounts to the WCC General Endowment Fund will be made by decision of the Sub-committee on Finance of the Executive Committee, on proposal of the Assistant General Secretary for Finance and Administration."

In 1988, two legacies were received from:

1. Mrs Ten Kate, of the Netherlands	Sfr 70,981.04
2. Dr. Margaret Gray Jones, of the UK	Sfr 21,360.--
for a total	Sfr 92,341.04

The Sub-committee decided that both these amounts be credited to the WCC General Endowment Fund.

8. 1988 Undesignated Interest Allocation

In March 1988, the Executive Committee agreed to allocate Sfr 45,500 from interest earned on the general funds of the WCC for Church and Society's project on afforestation in Costa Rica.

The grant was given for the first consultation (two more small ones are still to be held in 1989). Happily, funds were sent by various donors in support of the 1988 consultation, so the WCC allocation was not used.

In view of the interest raised by this project, it is hoped that further support will be mobilised for the 1989 activities. However, in order to allow the second part of this project to proceed, the Sub-committee recommended that the interest allocation not used in 1988 be held as a guarantee against a possible shortfall in 1989, and that any unused remaining amount be returned to the central funds at the end of 1989.

The Executive Committee agreed.

The Sub-committee requested that staff present an evaluation of the use of interest earned on general funds of the WCC for new, short term experimental programmes that can not otherwise be funded, at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee noted this request.

The Moderator expressed thanks to the Finance Sub-committee and staff for their work.

17. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

12 - 16 July 1989	Executive Committee	Moscow, USSR
16 - 27 July 1989	Central Committee	Moscow, USSR
5 - 13 March 1990	JPIC World Convocation	Seoul, Korea
22 - 24 March 1990	Executive Committee	Geneva, Switzerland
24 - 31 March 1990	Central Committee	Geneva, Switzerland

18. CLOSING ACTIONS

The Moderator expressed thanks to Rev. Claire Chimelli, pastor of the Parish of La Jonction, for the warm hospitality extended by the members of the parish to the Executive Committee. Mr Coïdan informed the Committee that Mme Chimelli had recently accepted the difficult assignment of pastor to a small congregation in West Beirut. Dr Held said that his church is sponsoring this assignment and he expressed appreciation on behalf of the Beirut congregation to Mme Chimelli and to the congregation in Geneva who had agreed to release her for this work.

Thanks were also expressed to Mme Schmidt, responsible for the parish house where the meeting took place.

The Moderator thanked members of staff who were responsible for planning the morning worship services including: Rev. Wesley Ariarajah, Rev. Myra Blyth, Rev. José Cunanan, Ms Lynda Katsuno, and Mr Terry McArthur.

The General Secretary noted that the Rev. Dr Eugene L. Stockwell, director of CWME, would be retiring from the service of the WCC at the end of June following the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism. The Executive Committee shared in the expression of gratitude and friendship and thanked Dr Stockwell for the energy and enthusiasm he had devoted to the WCC and to CWME over the past five years.

Gratitude was also expressed to Jean Stromberg and others who had worked to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting:

- Renate Sbeghen, Ursula Zierl and Mtislav Voskressensky (interpreters);
- Santi Pino, in charge of technical equipment;
- Brigitta Botros, conference secretary;
- Rosemary Green, minute writer.

The Moderator closed the meeting with prayer.

The meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 17.00 hrs on Friday 17 March.

APPENDIX I

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

Presidents:	Dr Marga Bührig Metropolitan Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios Very Rev. Dr Lois M. Wilson
Officers:	Rev. Dr Heinz Joachim Held (Moderator) H.E. Chrysostomos, Metropolitan of Myra (Vice-Moderator) Dr Sylvia Ross Talbot (Vice-Moderator) Rev. Dr Emilio Castro (General Secretary)
Members:	Ms Annathaie Abayasekera Metropolitan Antonie of Transsylvania Archbishop Athanasios of Beni Souef Mr John H.Y. Briggs Rev. Puafitu Faa'alo Ms Joyce Kaddu Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk Dr Janice Love Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan Rev. Meinrad Piske Ms Jean Skuse Dr Aaron Tolen Bishop Dr Karoly Toth Mr Per Voksoe
Consultant:	Bishop Sergiy of Solnechogorsk
Guest:	Rev. Dr Daniel D. I. Ciobotea (on 13 March)
Staff:	Rev. Dr Wesley Ariarajah Rev. Dr Ans van der Bent Ms Victoria Berry Prof. Ion Bria Mr Patrick Coïdan Mr Trevor Davies Ms Yvonne Fernandes Rev. Dr Günther Gassmann Prof. Dr Adriaan Geense Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson Rev. Anna Karin Hammar Rev. Fr Heikki Huttunen Rev. Canon Clement Janda Dr Dan C.O. Kaseje Ms Eeva Kemppi-Repo Rev. Dr. Irmgard Kindt-Siegwalt Mr Jan Kok Rev. Dr. N.-G. Limouris Dr Preman Niles

Ms Mercy Amba Oduyoye
Mr Oh Jae Shik
Rev. Clifford Payne
Rev. William Perkins
Mr Hugh Pettingell
Rev. Barney Pityana
Dr Klaus Poser
Prof. Todor Sabev
Rev. Carlos Sintado
Ms Ruth Sovik
Rev. Dr Eugene L. Stockwell
Ms Jean Stromberg

Interpreters: Ms Renate Sbeghen
Mr Mtislav Voskressensky
Ms Ursula Zierl

Minute writer: Ms Rosemary Green

Administration: Ms Brigitta Botros

APOLOGIES

Presidents: Dame R. Nita Barrow
Bishop Dr Johannes Hempel
His Beatitude Ignatios IV of Antioch
and All the East
Most Rev. W.P. Khotso Makhulu

Members: Mr Bena Silu
Rev. Dr J. Oscar McCLoud

APPENDIX II

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

SUB-COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMME

Metropolitan Chrysostomos	- Moderator (present part-time)
Metropolitan Antonie	
Dr Marga Bührig	
Metropolitan Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios	- Acting Moderator
Bishop Dr Johannes Hempel	(not present)
Patriarch Ignatios IV	(not present)
Ms Joyce Kaddu	
Dr Janice Love	
Ephorus S.A.E. Nababan	
Dr Aaron Tolen	

SUB-COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rev. Dr J. Oscar McCloud	- Moderator (not present)
Mr Béna-Silu	(not present)
Rev. Puafitu Faa'alo	
Ms Jean Skuse	
Mr Per Voksoe	
Very Rev. Lois Wilson	- Acting Moderator

SUB-COMMITTEE ON STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS

Dr Sylvia Ross Talbot	- Moderator
Ms Annathaie Abayasekera	
Archbishop Athanasios	
Dame R. Nita Barrow	(not present)
Mr John H.Y. Briggs	
Archbishop Kirill	
Archbishop W.P.K. Makhulu	(not present)
Rev. Meinrad Piske	
Bishop Karoly Toth	

APPENDIX III

1989 BUDGET

Budget entity	Total expenses budget	Internal recoveries & transfers	Net expense budget	Income	Transfers from fund balances	Allocation undesignated income
General Secretariat	1,809,939		1,809,939	20,000		1,789,939
U S Office	639,065	515,090	123,975	123,975		
O I C D	568,557	558,000	10,557		10,557	
Governing Bodies	766,259	766,259				
Library	728,320	610,500	117,820	101,500	16,320	
Conference & Travel Office	205,284	186,000	19,284	37,000	-17,716	
Ecumenical Sharing of Resources	342,736	316,720	26,016	35,500	-9,484	
Total General Secretariat	5,060,159	2,952,568	2,107,591	317,975	-323	1,789,939
Faith & Order	1,348,670	33,000	1,315,670	442,954	6,921	865,795
C W M E	2,690,486	78,931	2,611,555	2,211,344	400,211	
Dialogue	1,007,699	0	1,007,699	382,057		625,642
Church & Society	802,610		802,610	287,534		515,076
Unit I General	4,500		4,500	2,100		2,400
Total Unit I	5,853,964	111,931	5,742,033	3,325,989	407,132	2,008,912
C I C A R W S	10,529,211	3,692,433	6,836,778	6,318,590	518,188	
Unit II Service Programme	6,667,589	287,965	6,379,624	6,235,762	143,862	
J P I C	1,000,644	144,000	856,644	595,750	260,894	
C C I A	1,626,978	1,015,329	611,649	611,649		
P C R	1,475,158	675,317	799,841	799,841		
C C P D	1,999,363	1,544,279	455,083	372,718	82,365	
C M C	2,273,812	111,642	2,162,170	2,068,060	94,110	
Total Unit II	25,572,755	7,470,966	18,101,789	17,002,370	1,099,419	
Renewal & Congregational Life	832,338	25,000	807,338	561,856		245,482
Youth	850,719	68,500	782,219	554,853	110,000	117,366
Women	1,181,787		1,181,787	940,694	241,093	
Young Women Doing Theology	156,040	156,040				
Education	3,231,547	416,610	2,814,937	2,547,159	267,778	
P T E	1,788,412		1,788,412	1,415,333	373,079	
Unit III General	61,750	50,000	11,750			11,750
Total Unit III	8,102,592	716,151	7,386,442	6,019,895	991,949	374,597
Communication	7,296,460	4,371,534	2,924,926	1,228,503	92,323	1,604,100
Ecumenical Institute Bossey	2,266,338		2,266,338	1,950,386	43,152	272,800
Finance & Central Services	7,025,342	4,340,407	2,684,935	2,056,871	628,063	
Seventh Assembly Reserve	300,000	300,000				
Over recoveries		38,053	-38,053		-26,637	-11,416
Undesignated Income				6,000,000		
	61,477,610	20,301,610	41,176,001	37,901,989	3,235,078	6,038,933

Vital and Coherent Theology

(Summary of Executive Committee Discussion)

The following summary has no official status. It is based on personal memory and notes taken by our minute secretary. It does not pretend to reproduce the whole discussion, nor is it aimed at covering all ideas, concerns and arguments which were expressed. In fact, it is only meant to help to keep in mind the most important points and the main questions as they are seen personally by the author of this summary.

1.

The Executive Committee, after taking part in the morning worship in the chapel at the Ecumenical Center, dedicated all sessions of the day to the discussion on vital and coherent theology. They where presided by the Vice-Moderator Dr. Sylvia Talbot. In addition to the existing documents on vital and coherent theology by Dr. José Miguez-Bonino, Dr. M. M. Thomas, Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios and Dr. Ans J. van der Bent (cf.The Ecumenical Review, Volume 41, pp.160ff.), papers written by Dr. Samuel Amirtham and by Dr. Irmgard Kindt-Siegwalt (cf.op.cit.,pp.213ff.) on the same subject had been distributed as preparatory materials. In the course of the discussion Dr. Dan-Ilie Ciobotea gave a summary of his written presentation on the problem of a vital and coherent theology in the WCC.

At the beginning the General Secretary explained his understanding of the concern for a vital and coherent theology: to get the different sectors of the Council to talk to each other; to discern what is the central focus of the ecumenical movement today; and to single out a concern that might need a concentrated approach and could become the programmatic thrust towards the assembly and beyond.

He presented a panel of three members: Dr. Held, Ms Annathaie Abayasekera and Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk who would together introduce four issues in order to enable the discussion:

a. The sense of awe and worship, as belonging to theology in the best tradition of the Church, from which an ecumenical theology is to emerge

b. The meaning of communion/koinonia, as the key concept and experience which could preside over our theological reflection in the WCC

c. The relation between the contextual theologies of today to the perennial tradition of the Gospel which is given to the Church through the centuries

d. A theological reflection on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) in the light of the three preceding topics: spirituality, koinonia, tradition.

After plenary discussions, the Executive Committee and members of the WCC staff present broke into groups for more intensive dialogue about the different issues raised. There was however no final reporting. At the end of the last session the General Secretary presented orally a personal summary of the whole discussion. The desire was expressed to have a short summary report.

2.

While the concern for the WCC to grow towards a vital and coherent theology, as expressed by the Vancouver Assembly, was affirmed, it was recognized that the term itself has already become a slogan, difficult to define, to interpret and to translate into the different languages. It was urged not to concentrate on a discussion of the terms, but to dedicate the attention to the content matter itself. It was felt that there is an uneasiness about the lack of a concentrated theological approach in the WCC which would interrelate its different programmatic thrusts and activities. There was a strong awareness that, given the different and differing contexts and traditions

represented in the WCC, what appears coherent and vital to some is felt incoherent and irrelevant by others. It was strongly argued that theology is no mere academic, abstract exercise but inevitably related to the life of the Church: to the life experience of being a follower of Christ and incorporated into the community of his Church; but also to the concrete challenges and struggles which people experience in a given situation today. It was further pointed out that the traditional theological language very often does not carry any meaning for those engaged in the struggles of today and in the quest for theological relevance in the ideological conflicts of our time.

It was further said that, in the WCC, we are still lacking a common theological language and that this is not merely a matter of new formulations but of living up to our faith and of communicating the Gospel truth in our lives through attitude and action.

It was warned that a coherent theology must not be mistaken to be a unified theology, as truth at times cannot be expressed but in a dialectical way through contradictory statements, and that "to look for a total coherence and vitality is probably overambitious".

3.

There was no question about genuine spirituality to be developed as the proper context not only for theological reflection to be done in the Council but also for all other programme work going on. Concern was expressed that worship and business should be better interrelated, but it was also said that the quest for spirituality in the Council must not be interpreted in terms of more emotional experiences. It was however recognized that more experiences in common prayer and worship could help the churches and their representatives in the WCC to develop a greater awareness of spiritually belonging to each other and to grow in mutual commitment as

a community of churches. In such a context of common prayer and an expectant listening to the word of God it can be hoped that the deeper roots of our community as churches are experienced and strengthened and that we are finally enabled to express together in clearer terms the unity in Christ which is already given to us as we live and struggle as a fellowship of churches in the WCC.

Reference was made to the growing importance which prayer, liturgical acts and worship have attained over the years in the assemblies of the Council and in its work at large. Not only must theology be done in a prayerful spirit and in a context of worship, but a theological conviction or message can at times be expressed best in the language of prayer.

Recent developments in the Soviet Union have made it clear what an importance must be assigned to the theme of spirituality even in a socialist country. The churches are looked upon for answers.

4.

The notion community/koinonia seems to be the key concept and the key reality around which our theological and practical ecumenical efforts in the WCC are to center. Community/koinonia represents a good interpretation of the unity we are called to. It is a term which expresses the experience of coherence. In its biblical context, it means communion with the Triune God, and also in God with each other. It combines the vertical and the horizontal, the theological and the social dimensions of the community of faith and love which the churches are summoned to be. The mission of Christ can be interpreted as the divine-given ministry to restore women and men to full fellowship with God and with each other. All major programme thrusts of the WCC can be related to this concept and reality of community/koinonia: the unity of the Church, the struggle for justice and peace, participation and sharing, the call

to conversion and the healing ministry, etc.

It was also argued that community must be understood and experienced in very concrete terms, not as an intellectual enterprise but as community in solidarity, for instance with those who are oppressed, as "a willingness to lose ourselves" and to "put your body on the line". It was further said that community is a reality which offers the opportunity to share the concerns, quests and sufferings of other people as if they were our own, where true dialogue is possible in which people do not impose themselves upon each other but know how to accept each other and from each other.

It was further expressed that the community/koinonia we are striving for in the WCC in its deepest understanding is not something we can establish ourselves as it is rooted in the divine community/koinonia revealed in and given to us through Jesus Christ. All our work in the WCC should make it clear that it is meant to express and deepen this community in Christ.

5.

It is obvious that the churches today live in many different contexts and cultures where they are called to respond accordingly in witness and service. It is necessary that these many contextual theological approaches are inter-related and held accountable to the one Gospel of Christ as handed on through the Tradition of the Apostolic Faith coming through the centuries from the ancient and undevided Church. It was pointed out that "tradition is a process of creating and integrating new theological answers related to new historical situations or new geographical contexts; on the other hand tradition is a process of critical selection of what comes to us as new". The need was felt to express in an accepted form and in a common theological language what the central thrust of the Gospel is and the Apostolic Tradition of faith which we consider as the source and

criterion for every contextual theology.

It was asked whether we need first to reach a total agreement in theological doctrine before we express recognition of the community/koinonia in Christ which already exists between us and which we indeed experience.

Concern was further expressed about the difficulties to relate the classical theological traditions of the Church to the experiences with the Gospel in many present day situations. It seems that classical theology has little to do with those life experiences and that therefore new theological approaches are needed.

6.

With respect to the concern for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC), it was stated that far more attention has been given recently to the problems of the Integrity of Creation than before when the issues of justice and peace have been in the forefront. With reference to discussions going on in the Soviet Union it was strongly argued that there is also a need to take the theme of the integrity of the human person into serious consideration. This is not only a question of human rights but of a new understanding of the human person. It must be recognized that in every human being there is a "personal vertical dimension".

The question was raised whether there are elements in the theological tradition of the Church to be recovered in order to develop a more appropriate anthropology and ethics with respect to the need for safeguarding the integrity of creation. It was pointed out that there is a tradition in classical theological thought that humankind was created to cooperate with God the creator of the universe to be the steward and the guardian of creation. This calls for more than a mere contemplation of creation and is certainly totally opposed to its exploitation and destruction.

It was further said how intimately the concept of community relates to the JPIC concerns. Humankind as part of God's creation finds itself in a community-relation to the created order; every threat to creation, to justice and peace is always an attempt against community. Where there is injustice, absence of peace or exploitation of nature, it means that community is destroyed. There was also a warning not to isolate creation from history and to develop a theology of creation on its own, disregarding the theological aspects of redemption and eschatology.

7.

In the course of the discussions the hope was expressed that a stronger sense of community would develop in the WCC, in its governing bodies and its staff. It was said that we need to go "beyond being a group towards being a community". There is still a strong feeling that we have not made much progress in overcoming the tendencies of compartmentalization in our programme activities as WCC. We still need to develop a stronger sense of a common purpose and express it in our day to day work and in our communication with the memberchurches.

But it was also said that we have many reasons to thank God for what we have been able to experience and achieve in the WCC in terms of coherence and vitality. Our being a fellowship of churches for over forty years in the WCC has left its mark upon the life and the thought of the individual churches. We must not disregard the work of the Holy Spirit breaking down barriers and creating community in Christ. We should better ask what are the practical results and consequences out of these forty years of working together in the WCC for our self-understanding and for our mutual relationships as churches in the future.

Heinz Joachim Held

APPENDIX IV B.

VITAL AND COHERENT THEOLOGY

- An overview of work done since Vancouver -

In the course of the last 4 1/2 years (1984-1989), several proposals emerging from papers and discussions on this subject have been dealt with at all levels. Others are still in process of implementation, while still others - relating to a future period - will come under consideration in connection with preparations for the Canberra Assembly and beyond.

Tasks assigned and accomplished so far can be summarised as follows:

- the inclusion of more theological content in WCC documents and discussion in ecumenical meetings;

- intensive theological exchange in staff meetings (Staff Executive Group, Unit staff meetings, Weeks of Meetings, issue-oriented consultations, ad hoc groups);

- close cooperation and encounter between sub-units, particularly on projects and themes of common interest (e.g. unity/mission, dialogue/mission), and on overall WCC concerns;

- preparation of a list of documents and publications underlying the theological presuppositions of sub-unit programmes;

- presentation of sub-unit work to SEG, thus providing an opportunity to articulate, justify and make more explicit the theological convictions that undergird the various programmes;

- the search for adequate theological fertilisation, "cross-questioning", mutual challenge, correction and support among sub-units;

- use of Holy Week to study issues of spirituality and theology, inviting speakers from outside the Ecumenical Centre.

Reference to vital and coherent theology has been made in official reports of the WCC General Secretary and the Moderator of Central Committee, thus involving the governing bodies in discussions on the topic. A paper by Dr Hans-Ruedi Weber helped to assess the use of the Bible in a number of studies and documents. The need for a Trinitarian theological framework is being considered in relation to the Canberra Assembly's main theme on the Holy Spirit.

Questions regarding different ecclesiologies were looked at during a recent Faith and Order consultation, while others will be addressed at subsequent meetings. Attention has been given to

the dogmatic/ethics problem in the contexts of the 1988 analysis of WCC ethical statements, appraisal of ecumenical social thought, joint workshops of Faith and Order and Church and Society, inter-sub-unit endeavours and theological/ethical approaches to the AIDS issue. Much more has to be done through the JPIC process, an through the co-sponsored studies on the agenda of the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church.

The call for a "common memory" has been met by the reprinting of the two volumes of the History of the Ecumenical Movement and the Memoires of Dr Visser 't Hooft, and continues in the preparation of an Ecumenical Dictionary and a collection of Oral Records of Ecumenical History. The publication "Commemorating Amsterdam 1948: 40 years of the WCC" is also an important contribution in this field.

Thus the WCC has been well advised to substitute the creation of a Theological Advisory Group (proposed by the Vancouver Assembly) by several flexible methods which are integrated organically into the Council's ongoing work towards a vital and coherent theology.